TL1445-132

Annex

LETTER DATED 6 FEBRUARY 1989 FROM THE APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF DILI ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I take the liberty of writing you to let you know that the process of decolonization of Portuguese Timor has not yet been resolved by the United Nations, a fact that should not be forgotten. We, the people of Timor, believe that we should be consulted about the destiny of our homeland. That is why, as the one responsible for the Catholic Church, and as a citizen of Timor, I ask you through this letter to initiate in Timor a more normal and democratic process of decolonization that is achieved by means of a referendum. The people of Timor must be consulted about its future through a plebiscite. Up to now, the people have yet to be consulted. Others speak in the people's name: Indonesia declares that the people of Timor have already chosen integration, but the people of Timor have never said so; Portugal wishes that time will take care of this problem. Meanwhile, we are dying as a people and as a nation.

You are a democrat and a friend of human rights. Therefore, do demonstrate through deeds the respect for the spirit and the letter of the Charter of the United Nations which gives to all peoples on this planet the right to choose their own destiny in a free, conscientious and responsible manner.

There is not a more democratic way to ascertain the supreme will of the Timorese people than through a referendum promoted by the United Nations.

I thank you for all your sympathy for the people of Timor.

(Signed) Carlos Filipe Ximenes BELO, SDB
Titular Bishop of Lorium
Apostolic Administrator of Dili